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His work is obviously the result of prolonged and painstaking research. An introduction of thirty pages describes the family history of the Walsinghams from medieval times down to the Reformation; the first book (230 pages, in three chapters) discusses the youth, training and first political activities of Sir Francis up to the year 1570; the second, which forms the bulk of the volume and completes it, is exclusively occupied with a minute description of his embassy to France up to 1573. The thoroughness and solidity of this part of the work is beyond question. Every fine point of the French marriage negotiations is laboriously discussed, every tangle of cross-purposes unravelled, every phase of Walsingham's stay in Paris (no less than ten are specifically enumerated) is subjected to the closest scrutiny. But there is little imagination, no sense of humor, and a conspicuous absence of light and shade which leaves the reader utterly bewildered at the close. With all his research Dr. Stählin has not been quite able to put himself in the place of the man whom he describes; and the interest of his narrative suffers greatly in consequence. Moreover when dealing with internal affairs his judgment and estimate of the relative values of different authorities are by no means always to be implicitly trusted. The unsupported assertion of the erratic eighteenth-century antiquary, Browne Willis, for instance, is certainly an inadequate foundation for the positive statement on page 126 that Walsingham sat as member for Banbury in Elizabeth's first parliament, especially in view of the fact that the official lists of *Members of Parliament* printed by order of the House of Commons (*Parl. Pap.*, 1878, 69, pt. I., pp. 400-402) give no return for that town in 1558-1559.

It would not, however, be fair to imply that the book is disfigured by many such blemishes as this. Though its bulk and lack of proportion render it almost unreadable for any but the specialist, it will long remain a mine of valuable information concerning one of the most complicated periods of Elizabethan history; and its use will be rendered far easier than that of many other similar productions by an admirable index of names and places. A second volume, which is to contain a critical bibliography and an essay on the manuscript sources, will complete the work.

ROGER BIGELOW MERRIMAN.

The Origins of the British Colonial System, 1578-1660. By GEORGE LOUIS BEER. (New York: The Macmillan Company. 1908. Pp. viii, 438.)

IN 1907 Mr. Beer issued the first volume of his series upon the old colonial policy of Great Britain, in which he presented in a new and convincing fashion the fundamental causes of the separation of the colonies from the mother country. He now turns back to the beginnings of his subject and analyzes with great thoroughness and skill the origins

of British policy, tracing step by step the growth of certain financial and commercial principles that were to be the bases, at a later time, of a definite colonial system. In future volumes he will fill in the gap from 1660 to 1754, a task requiring at least three volumes more and involving the handling of many exceedingly difficult and obscure problems.

Mr. Beer views the colonies as the outcome of a natural process in British expansion and as furnishing from the beginning all the conditions of a new experiment. The establishment of the colonies in America "was not the result of isolated or fortuitous circumstances but, like all great historical developments, was intimately connected with the main currents of the world's political evolution". Our colonial period was not merely the earliest phase in the rise of an independent nation, it was still more the time in the history of a world-wide colonizing movement when Great Britain sought so to mould metropolis and colony as "to conform to the prevailing idea of a self-sufficient empire". In the eyes of the men of the early seventeenth century Virginia, Massachusetts and Barbadoes were not separate communities detached from the mother country, but were outlying dependencies serving to reinforce the mother state in its natural and inevitable conflict with other European maritime powers. The relationship thus created gave rise to certain principles of control not formulated by theorists or doctrinaires but prepared in the crucible of practical necessity. These principles shaped themselves gradually in practice and like all great social and governmental ideas had been long in actual operation before they became fixed in the writings of the mercantilists.

The great merit of Mr. Beer's book is that it traces these principles back to their origins and follows their appearance one by one, at different times and under different circumstances, in the gradual shaping of something like a colonial system. This evidence does not show us any completed or articulated scheme of control, but it does show that such a system was in process of crystallization earlier than has commonly been deemed to be the case. All the essential ideas of the mercantilists regarding the colonies as sources of supply for the mother country alone are to be found well established before 1640. England was already applying most of the injunctions laid down in the navigation acts twenty years before those acts were drafted, so that the great statutes of the reign of Charles II. were rather a culmination than a cause. England was encouraging the colonies to produce what had to be bought of other countries and was forbidding them to traffic with foreigners or to allow foreigners to traffic with them. Similarly she was viewing the colonies from the standpoint of her customs and her shipping, and as a place of receipt for her criminals and for the vagrants of her cities. She was making herself the vent and staple and was borrowing from the practices of the merchant companies the idea of a monopoly of trade.

All these points Mr. Beer brings out with great clearness and supports them with a wealth of evidence, and the chapters which contain the

exposition of his main thesis are the most important portions of his book. Less novel are the pages devoted to the beginnings of the administrative system and less convincing in that they seem to show a more orderly scheme of colonial control than the various experiments of the period would warrant us in accepting. Management of the colonies in the years before 1660 was little more than an attempt to find a way without adequate chart or compass and, as compared with the comprehensive system gradually called into existence after 1660, was casual and almost haphazard. I differ very unwillingly from a writer who has made this field so peculiarly his own, but I am unable to believe that the attitude of the early Stuarts toward Virginia and Massachusetts was actuated by any lofty plan of imperial unity. The motives seem to me to have been essentially political and religious and not colonial in the true sense of that word. Similarly, I am unable to believe in the greatness of Cromwell as the founder of a colonial system. Circumstances demanded an extension of the power and authority of the Commonwealth and thereby created an apparent tendency toward centralization in the various parts of the British dominions, but it certainly was not accompanied by any adequate scheme of colonial organization. I cannot believe that either Cromwell or the early Stuarts conceived of a colonial empire in anything like the later sense of that term. Differences of opinion may be nothing more than differences as to the motives of those who were the ruling powers in England. As Mr. Beer himself says, "the time was not ripe for the establishment of a comprehensive and symmetrical system of colonial control". The age before 1655 was still religious and men were not thinking "colonially". But they were working out more or less unconsciously some of the essential principles that were to find embodiment in the well-developed colonial policy of the more modern age that followed. This fact Mr. Beer demonstrates with absolute conclusiveness.

CHARLES M. ANDREWS.

A History of Modern Liberty. By JAMES MACKINNON. Volume III. *The Struggle with the Stuarts, 1603-1647.* (London and New York: Longmans, Green and Company. 1908. Pp. xviii, 501.)

THE monumental work of Professor Mackinnon makes rapid progress in spite of its bulk. Not only has he completed the third volume, but his preface tells us that the fourth is already in manuscript. The plan of his task now appears fully developed. It is, in itself, interesting, for it is proposed, practically, to rewrite certain selected portions of history most identified with the development of political liberty, from that standpoint. In pursuance of this idea volume I., on the Middle Ages, and volume II., on the Reformation, have already appeared. Volume IV. will conclude the struggle with the Stuarts, volume V. will treat of